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Weekend Weather Forecast (Lajes Weather Flight)

Saturday (a.m. / p.m.)
Mostly Cloudy
Wind SE 15 / 25 mph
SE 20 / 30 mph
High 17C / 63F
Low 12C / 54F

Sunday (a.m. / p.m.)
Mostly Cloudy / Partly Cloudy
Wind SE 25 / 35 mph
SE 25 / 35 mph
High 17C / 59F
Low 13C / 55F

Lajes on Iraq Drawdown: Engineer closes shops, reopens base

By Staff Sgt. Angelique N. Smythe
65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

Most people feel surprised when they receive orders to deploy to a contingency location while on a short tour assignment to Lajes Field.

However, Capt. Steven Mackinder, 65th Mission Support Group executive officer, said his deployment to help shut down operations in Iraq was no surprise at all.

Originally from the 65th Civil Engineer Squadron, Mackinder said he arrived to Lajes knowing full well that he would deploy. The engineer was on station nine months before flying to the U.S. for a month of combat skills training and then to Iraq to join the 467th Expeditionary Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force (Prime BEEF) Squadron.

"Our squadron's mission was to provide engineering support for all of Iraq," he said. "We had facility engineer teams at five to seven bases around Iraq and we had the ability to send people out to any base to help with anything. In country, we had approximately 70 engineers, 25 were officers."

The engineers did surveys, maps, structure assessments, project designs and project management.

"We were there to do minor construction projects but because we were leaving in December, there was not much construction going on," said Mackinder.

Mackinder started out his tour on an Army post at Contingency Operating Station Kalsu with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. He was the officer in charge of seven engineers there.

"We did a lot of surveying and mapping support," he said. "The big project was to put in four new helicopter parking areas; they were expanding their airfield, and we helped them with designing the layout."

This was important for the apache helicopters which provided ground support for the troops in the area.

"We got mortared a lot," Mackinder said. "When they had the apaches in the air, we didn't get mortared so much because as soon as (the bad guys) launched mortars, the apaches would respond, and they (the bad guys) didn't want to get killed. So we liked seeing the apaches flying around."

Mackinder stayed at COS Kalsu for two months, and, as part of the drawdown, he and his team closed up their shop and moved to their FET of about 20 engineers in Baghdad.

"We had about 50 soldiers attached to us from an

Iowa National Guard construction unit," he said. "That was different because, usually, it's Air Force personnel attached to Army units; but we had operational control of those soldiers who were actually replacing an Air Force construction team. That was pretty unique."

Since Mackinder had just gained experience in closing his shop in COS Kalsu, his boss placed him in charge of closing their shop in Baghdad.

"We were much bigger in Baghdad; we had more people, more equipment, more everything," he said. "There were eight of us at COS Kalsu and about 20 of us in Baghdad. We had all kinds of heavy equipment, loaders, excavators and big trucks; we had a huge compound in Baghdad. We probably had 50 computers just for us to use. We had a bunch of shops filled with tools and we needed to figure out what to do with them. I had to write a five-page plan on how we were going to get our unit out. We boxed up supplies and took them

to a unit that dealt with excess inventory. One of the last things we did was box up our computers. We also had to turn in all of our vehicles and equipment and inventory everything we were leaving behind for the Iraqis, such as office furniture and refrigerators that were in the office."

In August 2011, Mackinder traveled to an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia to do more drawdown preparations. It was a base that had been occupied several years before, shut down and then kept only as a war reserve materiel site. Minimal maintenance was done to keep the buildings and infrastructure there from falling apart.

"A lot of work needed to be done in order to reopen it for the F-16 unit from Balad to arrive," Mackinder said. "They were sending a team of 60 engineers from the states, but they had a really long delay so they decided to send some from our squadron to get as much done as we could before that team came in. So, I took 13 guys down - half from Baghdad and half from Balad."

The Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning team were constantly working on air conditioning units in the dormitories, work centers and dining facility. With so many electrical problems in every building, the electricians stayed quite busy as well. A lot of work needed to be done with the water and sewer systems.

"We based ourselves out of where the old CE squadron



Capt. Steven Mackinder, 65th Mission Support Group executive officer, deployed to Iraq as a civil engineer officer to support the troop drawdown efforts in 2011.

To read more on "drawdown" see page 4

Meet Maj. Raymond Castro 65th Comptroller Squadron commander



What motivated you to join the Air Force?

I always liked the military. Even though I don't come from a military family, the dad of one of my childhood friends was an F-16 pilot who would show us the planes, let us participate in air-refueling missions, and even took us to watch the F-16s drop bombs at a practice range. I was hooked.

What was your previous assignment?

I was stationed at MacDill AFB in Tampa, Fla. working at U.S. Central Command. I oversaw the budget of Security Cooperation offices at 21 different U.S. Embassies spread across Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia—in addition to providing fiscal policy and support to OIF and OEF operations.

What is your hometown?

I was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

How did you commission?

I got commissioned through the Air Force ROTC program at the University of Puerto Rico.

What's an aspect about CPTS, or being a finance officer, you think would be interesting for people to know?

Nothing is free...each decision that every leader makes at any level has a financial ramification, either in manpower, services, supplies or equipment. In finance we always have to be synchronized with leadership to ensure we provide the best financial decision support to obtain the funds required to successfully accomplish the mission. The Air Force operates just like the private sector...people can't do their job without money. In the Air Force this might appear seamless sometimes, but that's okay because it means we're doing our job and the mission is being taken care of.

Could you list one or two main highlights of your Air Force career?

The opportunity to command and lead a squadron is a true honor and privilege, especially with the team of professionals assigned here at Lajes who conquered the 2011 USAFE Financial Services Office of the Year Award.

How would you say Lajes differs from other bases you've been assigned?

The opportunity to work hand-in-hand with our Portuguese local nationals provides a unique capability that helps us better understand their culture and enjoy the island of Terceira.

What's one piece of advice you could give to young Airmen?

Always have a Plan A, Plan B, and even Plan C, so when different opportunities or situations emerge you are prepared to take advantage of them. Also, never, never quit no matter the circumstances.

Are there any particular quotes you live by?

I learned from my Boy Scouts years to "Be prepared".

Commander's Action Line

535-4240

65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil

The Commander's Action Line is your link to the commander for suggestions, kudos and as a way to work problems or issues within the 65th Air Base Wing for which you can't find another solution.

Your chain of command should always be your first option — but when that's not the answer,

call or e-mail the Commander's Action Line at 535-4240 or 65abw.actionline@lajes.af.mil.



Col. Jose Rivera

Col. Jose Rivera
Commander, 65th Air Base Wing



The 65th Air Base Wing Public Affairs staff prepares all editorial content in the Crossroads.

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Editorial Staff

Col. Jose Rivera

Commander, 65th Air Base Wing

1st Lt. Mara Title

Editor in Chief

Staff Sgt. Angelique Smythe

Editor

Mr. Eduardo Lima

Community Relations Adviser

Mr. Manuel Martins

Layout Designer



Experiences from School of Advanced Warfighting

By Maj. Scott Hopper

65th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander

Twice in January the students and faculty from the U.S. Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfighting, or SAW for short, transited Lajes Field on their way to and from their annual European staff ride. The class enjoyed a traditional "Proud Bulls" burger burn, a wing mission brief, a historical tour of military sites on Terceira and a dinner with wing leadership. Every member of the class certainly felt the Lajes "goodness" in their two short visits.

After their initial stay at Lajes, the group traveled onward to study military campaigns in North Africa and Europe. Their two-week trip included stops in Morocco, Turkey, Italy and France. A staff ride allows students to stand on historic battle grounds and "wear the commander's cloak" in an effort to grasp the complex problem-solving and decision-making skills necessary to plan a successful military campaign.

Each branch of service has a school designated for the advanced military studies program. These elite programs educate and train officers in military art and science. The curriculum integrates military history, military theory, and intense planning exercises. Graduates of their respective service intermediate level schools are eligible to apply for the advanced programs.

SAW is the smallest of the advanced schools. Only 26 students are accepted each year, to include representatives from all four branches of service and coalition partners. The rigorous application process consists of a records review, essay, and interview. Students read more than 20,000 pages throughout the academic year, in addition to participating in several campaign planning exercises. Graduates of the 12-month program are awarded a master's degree in Military Operational Studies.

The most unique aspect of SAW is the travel. Of the four advanced military studies programs, none travel as much as SAW. Each year the class will take staff rides in central Virginia, Europe and the Pacific. The Commandant's own fleet of two C-9B aircraft, used primarily for



(Left) Maj. Scott Hopper, 65th Logistics Readiness Squadron commander, and members from the U.S. Marine Corps School of Advanced Warfighting, listen to (second, right) Andy Billman, 65th Air Base Wing historian, during a tour of military sites on Terceira, Jan. 25, 2012. (Photo by Guido Melo)

high priority passenger movement, is dedicated to supporting the class' travel.

I am a 2011 graduate of SAW. During my year of study, I had some incredible opportunities to experience military history.

I stood at Leyte beach, the infamous site of MacArthur's return to the Philippines. I traced the footsteps of French soldiers in the World War I Battle of Verdun, which saw 306,000 deaths. I visited the Hoa Lo prison in Vietnam, where my tour guide told me Americans like Bud Day and John McCain called it the "Hanoi Hilton" because of the fine treatment they received. I stood on a remote Vietnamese hilltop

To read more on "Warfighting" see page 4

Air Force Safety Center's new headphone guidance

By Bruno Nogueira

65th Air Base Wing Safety

The Air Force Safety Center has clarified the requirements for the use of listening and entertainment devices by walkers, joggers, runners, bicyclists, and skaters or skateboarders on a roadway, because of some confusion with previous statements. The guidance below from the AFSC, specifies what constitutes a listening and entertainment device and also what constitutes a roadway, to enable the correct application of requirement throughout the Air Force.

One key point is that people wearing portable listening devices are allowed to use them on sidewalks. However, when there is a break in the road, they are required to remove them when they cross the street.

The following is taken from the Air Force Ground Safety Letter of Interpretation (AF LOI 12-006):

The language in AFI 91-207 is designed to comply with DoDI guidance.

Apart from hearing aids, the use of portable headphones, earphones, cellular phones, iPods, or other listening and entertainment devices (including those with single ear-pieces or non-ear-bud external speakers) while walking, jogging, running, bicycling, skating or skateboarding on roadways is prohibited for the sake of ensuring good situational awareness resulting in a lower possibility of mishap.

Discussion:

The use of portable headphones, earphones, cellular phones, iPods,

or other listening and entertainment devices impairs recognition of emergency signals, alarms, announcements, approaching vehicles, human speech, and outside noise in general.

This requirement in AFI 91-207 was derived from DoDI 6055.04 with the intent of preventing pedestrian-vehicle mishaps and applies only to roadways. Roadway is defined by the Air Force Safety Center as a strip of land dedicated for the conveyance of vehicles, including

the shoulder and median when present, as well as parking lots since vehicles traverse that strip of land as well.

Personnel jogging or running on the sidewalks or areas along a roadway that were not specifically designed for vehicle travel or parking are not subject to this requirement, (i.e., pathways in the grass/dirt alongside a road). Along the same lines, specifically designed jogging trails, tracks, and recreational areas are also not subject to this requirement. It is understood that in the case where a pedestrian needs to cross an active roadway, such as at an

intersection, it would be inconvenient to remove the headphones or ear buds for such a short time, especially if the sidewalk or jogging trail crossed roadways multiple times.

Unfortunately, the DoDI guidance and good judgment do not allow the restriction to be relaxed. In fact, pedestrians crossing roadways present a hazard to themselves and motor traffic. They should have all their senses alerted to search for oncoming traffic and cross a road safely.

If this restriction is too onerous, then the suggestion is to find a more appropriate place to exercise where this hazard is not present.





"Warfighting" from page 3

overlooking the airfield, where the French suffered a massive defeat at Dien Bien Phu. I met an elderly woman in Italy who watched from her hilltop home as German forces slaughtered Americans at the Rapido River crossing, changing the water's color to red. I watched my Australian classmate collect sand from the beaches of Gallipoli, where 26,000 Australian forces lost their lives in WWI. I peered over the edge of "Suicide Cliff," where more than 20,000 Japanese plummeted to their death in the Battle of Saipan. I saw the sunrise on Omaha beach.

Learning about warfare and history in a classroom is certainly beneficial for any military professional. But to stand among history and interact with a battlefield brings a whole new level of understanding to campaign planning. I was able to comprehend the challenges of command and the complexity of decision-making at the operational level. These lessons will remain with me and my classmates, as we go

on to assignments as military planners and eventually as operational commanders.

Standing on those battlefields taught me something more than the intended curriculum. Each war memorial I visited told stories of immense human struggle, heroic actions and unimaginable loss of life. Regardless of whether the narrative came from the victor or the vanquished, the stories were the same. Heroic Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines are willing to endure unlimited sacrifice to defend those they love and that in which they believe. While at the Normandy American Cemetery, the curator allowed me to raise the American flag. It was an extremely moving moment. The United States has a revered tradition of warriors willing to give their lives in defense of our beloved nation. I am proud to be a member of such an impressive group of Americans and am committed to honoring that tradition through my own dedicated service.

My year at SAW taught me a lot. More importantly, my year at SAW inspired me.

"drawdown" from page 1

was located, so there were shops, a structure shop, an electrical shop, but no tools," Mackinder said. "We had only brought minimal tools so we could do the basic stuff. So one of the biggest things we had to do was build a list of items the contracting office would need to purchase so that the 60-man team could have the appropriate tools when they got there. We didn't have the manpower to actually do those projects ourselves, but we built the materials list and statement of work so that the big team could hit the ground running and wouldn't have to waste any time figuring out what needed to be done."

Mackinder and his team bridged the gap in time between the decision to reopen the airbase and when the 60-man team would arrive. This base allowed the F-16 unit to leave Iraq during the drawdown period, but still kept them

in close proximity to support ground troops when needed.

"I think our guys did a really good job," Mackinder said. "They were busy for nine solid days. That was probably the one part of my deployment that I'm actually most proud of because that's really what a CE officer's main job is - to lead a small team to actually do something just like that."

Mackinder redeployed to Lajes in October 2011. He was very grateful to Team Lajes, the 65th CES and their tight group of friends for taking care of his wife, Jill, who is also the 65th CES secretary.

Editor's note: This is part three of a series on Airmen from Lajes Field, Azores, who've played important roles during the drawdown of troops from Iraq in December 2011.

Team Lajes welcomes newest member!

Michaela Maria-Ann Brooks was born Jan. 16, 2012, to Tech. Sgt. Lateisha Wise-Brooks, AFOSI Det. 516, and her husband, Michael Brooks.

Congratulations!



LAJES WARRIORS OF THE WEEK



Name: Sandra C. Lopes
Rank: LGS-03
Unit: 729th AMS
Hometown: Torres Novas, Portugal
Duty Title: Passenger Service Representative
Accomplishments: Ms. Lopes is the newest hired Air Mobility Command Passenger Service Agent, providing continuous support to the Lajes community and AMC passengers. Her supervisory background in airport

security and familiarization with Transportation Security Agency requirements was crucial to the successful movement of over 3,318 passengers and 68,556 pounds of baggage. She is a true professional that stands ready to service on a moment's notice and is a valued asset to the AMC Passenger Service team here at Lajes!



Name: Kristopher Lassiter
Rank: Staff Sgt.
Unit: 729th AMS
Hometown: Cleveland, Ga.
Duty Title: Air Terminal Operations Center controller
Accomplishments: Staff Sgt. Kristopher Lassiter is an Air Transportation Supervisor currently working in the Air Terminal Operations Center for the 729 Air Mobility Squadron.

Sgt. Lassiter is responsible for information control of all transiting AMC aircraft requiring fleet, ramp, and passenger service to Lajes Field. He is also a load team chief for downloading and uploading passenger and cargo aircraft under the control of the Air Mobility Command stopping at Lajes Field. Recently he was named the 729th AMS Air Terminal Operations Center Professional of the Year for 2011. Sgt. Lassiter likes to spend his time snorkeling, bowling and relaxing with his friends and family.



"6-5...IN THE FIGHT!"

Feature



An F-16 from the Pakistan Air Force is parked on the Lajes Field flightline for a gas n' go Feb. 1. (Photo by Lucas Silva)



Members from the 65th Wing Staff Agency cheer on their "Chocolate on Your Shirt!" team during the 65th Force Support Squadron's Kombat Kitchen event at the Top of the Rock Club, Jan. 27. Four teams competed in the first-ever kitchen competition, using MREs and fresh food ingredients. (Photo by Paulette Burnard)



Lajes Airman Leadership School students run a 3.3-mile beach run in Praia da Vitoria, Jan. 30, 2012. This event is one of many that challenges the students to excel. (Photo by Manuel Martins)

2012
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65th
Medical
Group



(Left to Right) Biomedical Specialist Field Grade Officer of the Year, Maj. Anthony Caruso, Biomedical Specialist CGO of the Year, Capt. Trinette Flowers-Torres, Outstanding Mental Health NCO of the Year, Master Sgt. Carmen Wyatt, and the Company Grade Clinical Excellence Award winner, Maj. David Klein. (Photo by Lucas Silva)



Mark your calendar

LATE REPORTING MONDAY: The commander has authorized late reporting for 10 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 6.

AFRICAN AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH - Celebrating Great Moments of Our Past, Present and Future: The African American Heritage

Committee is planning a number of fun events for the month of February, as we feature Black women in history, such as the following:

- Bowl-a-thon in conjunction with a Health Fair Feb. 10;
- AAHC Luncheon Feb. 17 at the TORC;
- Gospel Celebration Feb. 19 at the Chapel;
- 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament Feb. 20 at the Gym;
- African American Heritage Month 5K Run Feb. 24;
- Black and White Gala Feb. 25 at the TORC.

Also, tune in to AFN Radio 96.1FM at 10 a.m. Feb. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 for Black Education Talk (BET.)

Join the AAHC as they perform community service activities, such as volunteering at the Post Office Feb. 4 and 18 from 10 a.m. to noon and serve breakfast to Lajes' newest Right Start Airmen Feb. 8 and 22 at 7:30 a.m. For more information or to volunteer, contact Carlos Wade at 535-1197 or carlos.wade@lajes.af.mil. All AAHC events are open to everyone.

FLEA MARKET: Due to Youth Basketball Season there will be no Flea Market in February and March. The next one is April 21st.

COMMISSARY SCHOLARSHIP: Don't forget to pick up a college education on your next trip to the commissary! The Scholarships for Military Children Program can help with a \$1,500 scholarship! For information, contact your local commissary, school guidance counselor, or visit the program website at www.militaryscholar.org or www.commissaries.com. The application deadline is Feb. 24, 2012.

DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: There is a local digital photography exhibit in Praia at the "Academia de Juventude e Artes da Ilha Terceira" (Youth Academy). This free exhibit features the photos of photographer Hermano Noronha and is open to the public Monday-Friday between 1 and 5 p.m. The Youth Academy is located next to the Praia movie theater.

FINE ARTS WORKSHOP: There will be a children's fine arts workshop for children between six and 12 years old at the Academia de Juventude da Ilha Terceira, (Youth Academy) located next to the movie theater in Praia, Feb. 4 to June 16. The workshop will take place on Saturdays. E-mail academia@cmpv.pt or call 295 545 700 to sign up.



Feature

Phrase of the Week A LESSON IN PORTUGUESE



ENGLISH: How is your family doing?

PORTUGUESE: Como está a sua família?

PRONUNCIATION: Khomo estah ay sua phameeleea?



ASK ED

A column that looks at the culture and history of the Azores.

By Eduardo Lima

Community Relations Advisor



Angra Bay, a sanctuary of old shipwrecks



An engraving by Jan Huygen van Linschoten, a 16th century Dutch explorer, done by 1595. It shows the Terceira Island and at the center, the city of Angra do Heroísmo and the Monte Brasil.

of the marina's breakwater in 1998.

A few years ago, a local underwater expedition sponsored by the Regional Government of the Azores carried out a survey with the help of a miniature submarine. The expedition found and documented several anchors, a new shipwreck as well as other old artifacts, which have been documented and are now part of a rich local heritage.

The voyages of Christopher Columbus and other Portuguese navigators, namely the renowned Vasco da Gama, made the Azores the Crossroads of the Atlantic, and the early trading expeditions reinforced the importance of Terceira Island, particularly the Bay of Angra, as a port of call for ships sailing the Atlantic.

According to Portuguese historians, hundreds of shipwrecks occurred in the Azorean waters between the 15th and 20th centuries and made the Azores a sanctuary of the cultural underwater heritage.

Due to its strategic location, the Azores and Angra bay in particular, were a stopping point for most of the Portuguese ships returning from the Americas, Africa and India, which were heading to Europe and carrying spices and riches. Many of those ships shipwrecked in Angra bay due to the storms blowing from the south or other reasons.

One knows today that more than 90 ships have shipwrecked in the Angra bay alone, but their nationality has not been assessed with precision, although it's possible that some of those ships were Spanish.

Some of the ships' vestiges have been moved from their original location to a nearby location in the Angra bay due to the construction